In the claims:

1. (Currently amended) A site specific recombination method for removal of predetermined nucleic acid sequences from the plastid genome, said method comprising:

a) providing a first nucleic acid construct, said construct comprising a promoter being operably linked to a nucleic acid encoding ~~an optional~~ plastid targeting transit sequence which is operably linked to a nucleic acid encoding a ~~protein~~ site specific recombinase having excision activity, said construct further comprising a first selectable marker encoding nucleic acid having plant specific 5' and 3' regulatory nucleic acid sequences;

b) providing a second DNA construct, said second construct comprising an second selectable marker encoding nucleic acid sequence which is flanked by~~and~~ excision sites, said second construct optionally containing a gene of interest, said second construct further comprising flanking plastid targeting nucleic acid sequences which facilitate homologous recombination into said plastid genome;

c) introducing said second DNA construct into a plant cell;

d) culturing said plant cell of step c) in the presence of a selection agent, thereby selecting for those plant cells expressing the proteins encoded by said second DNA construct;
e) introducing said first DNA construct into plant cells from step d) in the presence of a selection agent and selecting those plant cells expressing proteins encoded by said first construct, which when present said ~~excising activity~~ site specific recombinase acts on said excision sites, thereby ~~excising~~ removing said ~~predetermined target~~ sequence flanked by said excision sites from said plastid genome.

2. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a plant is regenerated from plant cells of step c), cells are then contacted with said first construct and steps d) and e) are performed.

3. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first construct is that depicted in Figure 3.

4. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said second construct is that depicted in Figure 2.

5. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said ~~protein~~ site specific recombinase ~~having excision activity~~ is selected from the group consisting of CRE, flippase, resolvase, FLP, SSV1-encoded integrase, and transposase.

6. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said excision sites are LOX sequences when CRE recombinase is used~~,~~ and frt sequences when FLP recombinase is used.

7. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said selection agent is selected from the group consisting of kanamycin, gentamycin, spectinomycin, streptomycin and hygromycin, phosphinotricin, basta, glyphosate and bromoxynil.

8. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said excision of said predetermined sequence creates an expressible translational fusion protein.

~~10~~9. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said predetermined target sequence is the selectable marker encoding nucleic acid present in said second construct.

~~11~~10. (Currently amended) A plant regenerated from the plant cells of step e) ~~method~~ of claim 1.

~~12~~11. (Currently amended) A site specific recombination system comprising the constructs of the method of claim 1.

~~13~~12. (Currently amended) A site specific recombination method for removal of predetermined nucleic acid sequences from the plastid genome, said method comprising:

a) providing a first nucleic acid construct, said construct comprising a regulated promoter being operably linked to a nucleic acid encoding ~~an optional~~ plastid targeting transit sequence which is operably linked to a nucleic acid encoding a site specific recombinase ~~protein~~ having excision activity, said construct optionally further comprising a first selectable marker encoding nucleic acid having plant specific 5' and 3' regulatory nucleic acid sequences;

b) providing a second DNA construct, said second construct comprising an second selectable marker encoding nucleic acid ~~and excision sites~~, said second construct further comprising flanking plastid targeting nucleic acid sequences which facilitate homologous recombination into said plastid genome at a ~~predetermined target~~ plastid genome sequence targeted for deletion and excision sites ~~such that~~ said excision sites flanking both the plastid genome sequence targeted for deletion and the selectable marker nucleic acid ~~predetermined target~~ sequence ~~following homologous recombination~~;

c) introducing said second DNA construct into a plant cell;

d) culturing a plant cell of step c) in the presence of a selection agent, thereby selecting for those plant cells expressing the proteins encoded by said second DNA construct;

e) regenerating a plant from cells obtained in step d);

f) introducing said first DNA construct into plant cells from the plant of step e) in the presence of a selection agent and selecting those plant cells expressing proteins encoded by said first construct, which when present said site specific recombinase ~~excising activity~~ acts on said excision sites, thereby removing said plastid genome sequence targeted for deletion and said selectable marker nucleic acid ~~predetermined target~~ sequence.

~~14~~13. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim [[13]] 12, wherein said regulatable promoter is selected from the group of promoters consisting of inducible promoters, tissue specific promoters, developmentally regulated promoters and chemically inducible promoters.

~~15~~14. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim [[13]]12, wherein said predetermined target sequence is selected from the group consisting of ~~genes associated with~~ male sterility genes, clpP ribosomal proteins, and ribosomal RNA operon sequences.

~~16~~15. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim [[13]] 12, wherein said protein having excision activity is selected from the group consisting of CRE, flippase, resolvase, FLP, SSV1-encoded integrase, and transposase.

~~17~~16. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim [[13]] 12, wherein said excision sites are LOX sequences when CRE recombinase is used, and frt sequences when FLP recombinase is used.

~~18~~17. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim [[13]] 12, wherein said selection agent is selected from the group consisting of kanamycin, gentamycin, spectinomycin,

streptomycin and hygromycin, phosphinotricin, basta, glyphosate and bromoxynil.

~~19~~18. (Currently amended) A plant regenerated from the plant cells of step f) ~~method~~ of claim [[13]] 12.

~~20~~19. (Currently amended) A site specific recombination system for removal of predetermined nucleic acid sequences comprising the constructs of claim [[13]] 12.

~~21~~20. (Currently amended) Progeny plants obtained from the plant of claim [[11]] 10.

~~22~~21. (Currently amended) Progeny plants obtained from the plant of claim [[18]] 17.